

## HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.

CXXXIV.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Christmas is the one day which nearly the whole civilized world celebrates. It has given more real pleasure to children than can be had from all other sources combined. The shout of the angels to the shepherds brought happiness to a few, but today the number is almost beyond computation. Father saves up money to lay in supplies, mother does her best to see to how many of the family she can give something that will give joy and gladness, and brothers and sisters often plan for weeks ahead that the present shall be perfect and that it will give full satisfaction. Some of the heathen nations, like the Chinese, have their days of frost, but they are not to be compared to our Christmas.

There is one feature that is connected with the way we celebrate Christmas, which often mars the pleasure, and that is drinking to excess. It is to be hoped that this will change. It is rarely done except by men. If our wives and daughters should take a hand in the game, it is likely the men would give up in disgust.

The stores everywhere have a supply of toys to please the children. Santa Claus, during our childhood, confined himself to a few confectioneries, but what a change has come over this line of goods! Instead of a few nuts, candy, etc., there are toys of every description, some tools that are real useful, and many nice books are displayed from which a good selection may be made.

One other thing which we think ought to be included in every list is some musical instrument. How often has there been a taste for music aroused by some toy instrument like a toy violin, piano, etc.

Children should be encouraged to take care of their toys. If boys have a place given them to put away tools, etc., in; and we are required to put them away every time they are used, it will cause them to form habits which bring success in life, while if they neglect to have a place for every thing, they may wonder later in life why they could not succeed. Girls should be taught the same lessons, and while the toys are new and the children are so elated over them is a good time to give the first lessons in "place and order."

We always liked to have Christmas trees. There is nothing that will dazzle the eye of a child more than a nicely gotten-up Christmas tree with all the beautiful toys, etc., with the brilliant little wax candles of every color sending out their lights in every direction. Some times practical jokes are played off on people. Once in a while some one will get mad, which only adds fun to those who are concerned.

A merry Christmas and happy New Year to all is the wish of  
HARRY FARMER.

The date of the opening of King's Business College was incorrectly printed last week. It should have been January 4 instead of January 24.

## Avoid the Mushroom Swindle.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

One or two so-called firms in New York, with no responsible name attached, are sending circulars all over this State urging people to grow mushrooms for them, and telling wonderful tales about the profit of the business. They offer to send the spawn enough to spawn a bed 3x5 feet for \$1, and this is all there is in it, for any one can buy spawn enough for such a bed for ten cents. I find on reference to the catalogues. Then a green person will probably fail entirely in his first efforts, and will simply be out of pocket what he has paid the swindlers. They offer to buy all that are grown at the market price, and tell that the price is often as high as \$2 a pound, when, in fact, it is seldom above 50 cents, and often down to 25 cents, and never up to \$2. Mushrooms can only be grown commercially where there is a constant and plentiful supply of fresh horse manure, and they cannot be grown and shipped from here profitably even if they could be packed so as to carry safely. I fear these fellows are duping a good many women out of their dollars, as many have written to me for instructions about growing mushrooms, and have sent me the pretty circulars these swindlers have gotten out. I have exposed them to some extent in my paper, and I hope that the agricultural press of this State will aid in preventing poor people from being robbed, for these fellows will never buy a mushroom if any are grown. They tell their dupes that they can buy the spawn elsewhere if they send a sample to them to see if it is good. As no one can tell the quality of spawn from inspection, this simply means that they will pronounce it bad and sell theirs.

Yours truly,

W. F. MASSEY,  
Horticulturist North Carolina Experiment Station.

A child may know all the letters singly, yet be unable to put them into words. So it is possible to know every word in the Bible and yet to miss the revelation.—Joseph Parker.

Only the man who prays can really say whether prayer is answered. Why set a bulldog to criticise a nightingale?—Joseph Parker.



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## County Alliance Meetings.

Will you please allow me to say through your paper that at the meeting at the Sampson County Farmers' Alliance the second Thursday in January at Boykins there will be a public discussion on the following topic: Should the State appropriate an amount to the A. & M. College equal to that given to the other institutions of learning in the State? Let every one attend.

Fraternal,

A. D. LOCKEMAN,  
County Lecturer.

Please allow me space in your paper to announce to all Alliancemen that the next Wilson County Alliance will meet with Lucama Sub Alliance the second Thursday in January, 1904. All Alliance men are asked to attend the meeting.

J. H. FLOWERS,  
Sec-Treas. of W. C. A.

The Cumberland County Farmers' Alliance will hold its next regular meeting with Flea Hill sub at Flea Hill, on Wednesday before the second Thursday in January, 1904. Brethren, please let us have a good attendance on that day, and endeavor to make our County Alliance one of the best in the State. No doubt we'll meet with opposition from several sources by suspicious persons claiming that the Farmers' Alliance is a political party, first on the fence then on each side. Brethren, just politely tell all such persons they are mistaken in their ideas concerning our order. Not only tell them so, but let us prove this so by our actions.

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## The Popular Science Monthly.

The contents of the December Number include the following articles: . . . .

Recent Theories in regard to the Determination of Sex. Prof. T. H. MORGAN.  
The Academy of Science of St. Louis. Prof. WILLIAM TRELEASE.  
The Tetrahedral Kites of Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. GILBERT H. GROSVENOR.  
Hertzian Wave Wireless Telegraphy. Dr. J. A. FLEMING.  
The Salmon and Salmon Streams of Alaska. President DAVID STARR JORDAN.  
The Storm Center in the Balkans. Dr. ALLEN McLAUGHLIN.  
The Growth of Rural Population. FRANK T. CARLTON.  
Rear Admiral Melville, U. S. N., and Appled Science in the Construction of the New Fleet. The Late Prof. R. H. THURSTON.

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